

# Nationwide Building Society

Nationwide Building Society optimizes software development with ALM Octane, helping it deliver reliable services for members.



## Who is Nationwide Building Society?

With more than 15 million members, Nationwide Building Society (NBS) is the world's largest mutual financial institution. It is also the second largest mortgage provider in the UK, and one of the country's leading savings providers. With roots dating back 130 years, NBS employs around 17,000 people.

## Collaboration in Support of BDD and Shift Left Testing

People expect more from their banks and building societies than ever before. Whether it's checking their balance on the go, comparing mortgage rates or discovering new credit card offers, people want reliable services that work for them.

To provide its members with services they can bank on, NBS looked to embrace Agile and DevOps methodologies and "shift left" its

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**RICHARD JORDAN**  
Test Engineering Manager  
Nationwide Building Society

software testing to optimize application development. But a highly complex IT landscape and technical debt posed significant challenges.

Like most financial service institutions, NBS' network of IT systems is complex and highly diverse, encompassing everything from main-frame computers to cutting-edge microservices and event-driven architectures. "Our core systems are large and monolithic," confirms Richard Jordan, Test Engineering Manager at NBS. "What's more, knowledge of these systems was previously extremely siloed."

NBS' first step towards Agile and DevOps was to break up these silos. The organization established teams dedicated to specific value streams, such as online banking or mortgages, bringing together product owners, developers, and testers for the first time. "The aim was to improve communication between business and technical teams, a concept known as behavior-driven development (BDD)," says Richard Jordan. "We wanted to bring together insights from business stakeholders, developers, and testers, so that teams could build up a shared understanding of issues and work in rapid iterations to push each application through the development process."

To support its new collaborative, iterative software development strategy, NBS needed an



## At a Glance

- **Industry**  
Finance
- **Location**  
United Kingdom
- **Challenge**  
Embrace agile methodologies to optimize application quality throughout the software development lifecycle
- **Products and Services**  
ALM Octane
- **Success Highlights**
  - + Up to 90% reduction in defects in some areas
  - + Established a collaborative, iterative software development strategy between product owners, developers, and testers
  - + Enhanced visibility throughout the software lifecycle with dashboards and metrics for a unified overview of development progress
  - + Enhanced ability to analyze quality, progress, change impact, test coverage and more

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automated solution to help teams with planning, integration, testing, and release management.

### Visibility with a Central Hub for Real-Time Lifecycle Metrics

NBS selected ALM Octane as its strategic solution for application lifecycle management. Designed to ensure application quality and accelerate agile development and delivery, ALM Octane acts as a central hub from which work can be aligned from ideation through release.

Richard Jordan explains the software development lifecycle at NBS: “First, the business stakeholders, developers and testers decide what problem they want the software to solve. They then develop a common understanding of the technology stack and build models with engineered, predictable, and repeatable outcomes. Next, they automate testing execution as part of our new continuous integration and continuous delivery (CI/CD) process.”

Since adopting these agile practices, NBS performs testing much earlier in the development lifecycle than before. By shifting the testing stage “left”—i.e., earlier—in the project timeline, and enabling teams to test and deploy software more frequently, they can identify issues much earlier in the process.

“The first benefit of shifting left is speed: we’ve gone from project releases taking months to

teams delivering regular sprints of incremental value on a two-week basis,” says Richard Jordan. “The second benefit is in finding defects earlier. We very quickly saw that we had teams achieving at least 20% reduction in defects, and as we’ve matured, we’ve seen reductions of 50% to 90% in some areas.”

ALM Octane provides dashboards and metrics for a unified overview of development progress, enabling users to analyze quality, progress, change impact, and more. The solution serves as a central hub, giving users easy access to test results and other key data. ALM Octane also reports on the code coverage of automated tests, giving details on code coverage per package and per file, as well as code coverage trends over time.

“The code coverage reports in Micro Focus (now part of OpenText™) ALM Octane help us to understand complexity,” says Richard Jordan. “This is a really interesting dynamic for us. As we start to build out functional models or component models, we create functional representations of what the capability is supposed to look like. But we can also superimpose the coverage that we achieved when we’re doing our testing, which is a great step forward for us.”

He adds: “Rather than striving for the mythical 100% test coverage—which is always subjective—we’re using the Micro Focus (now part of OpenText™) tooling to provide functional

coverage techniques such as all pairs or decisions coverage, and to provide code coverage measures. By showing us any coverage gaps, this gives us two alternate lenses on the quality of our products.”

### Agile Application Quality through Continuous Optimization

With ALM Octane, NBS has empowered teams to continuously optimize software throughout the development lifecycle, helping the organization to deliver higher quality applications and improve services for its members.

“ALM Octane gives us full visibility into all aspects of the software quality management process,” says Richard Jordan. “Stakeholders are better able to identify defects in the code before the application goes into production, enabling them to assess the issues, create the solutions, and iterate on the design. This process never really ends, as we’re always making improvements to our software.”

He concludes: “Micro Focus (now part of OpenText™) ALM Octane has helped us to build a culture of quality, and of continuous learning and improvement.”

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#### Integrated third-party solutions

- Apache JMeter
- Jenkins

#### Deployment environment

- Cloud
- PaaS
- On-premises

#### Development methodology

- Agile
- Behavior-Driven Development (BDD)
- CI/CD
- Continuous Testing
- DevOps